

REMARKS

Claim Rejections Under 35 USC Section 102 & 103

Main Claim 1 is amended to define the invention subject matter more distinctly over the cited prior art. The cited Jigyodan JP10-005279 reference discloses putting a hip carrier 11 under the hip 17 of the user 18 who cannot stand up by himself and using the power of a motor 10 to pick the hip of the user up. Thus, this reference teaches exercising by supporting the user to stand up compulsorily under motor power. As distinct from the structure now defined in amended Claim 1, the Jigyodan reference does not disclose or suggest the chair (seat) being operated by coupling it to a lifting device by the user operating lifting arms having their other ends coupled to respective sliding members slidable in sliding slots formed in the supporting columns between downward and upward positions, a lifting mechanism connected to the sliding members for supporting them in their sliding movement in the sliding slots, and lifting members supported on the sliding members and coupled to the chair for moving the chair upward and downward in conjunction with operation of the lifting arms by the user so as to always position the chair near the buttocks of the user performing the knee-bending exercises.

The Meyer patent shows a wheel chair having a pair of lifting arms operated by the user's arms for lifting the user to an erect position to transfer from the wheel chair to a toilet or other activity. However, Meyer does not disclose or suggest the lifting arms being connected to sliding members slidable in slots in vertical columns, lifting mechanisms supporting the sliding members for sliding movement between upward and downward positions, and lifting members supported on the sliding members and coupled to the chair for lifting the chair near the buttocks of the user by operation of the lifting arms.

The Marcoux patent shows a motor-assisted lifting chair for assisting a user to stand from a seated position. Hinged support arms are used to rock the chair forward and upward under motorized power to lift the user to a standing position. Marcoux does not disclose or suggest a lifting device including lifting arms being connected to sliding members slidable in slots in vertical columns, lifting mechanisms supporting the sliding members for sliding movement, and lifting members supported on the sliding members and coupled to the chair for lifting the chair near the buttocks of the user by operation of the lifting arms.

In summary, none of the cited prior art discloses or suggests the arm-operated seat-lifting structure as now defined in amended Claim 1, nor is such structure obtainable by any suggested modification or combination of the teachings of the cited references. Amended Claim 1 is therefore deemed to be patentable over the cited prior art. The remaining dependent Claims 2-18 are maintained and deemed to be patentable for the same reasons as main Claim 1 on which they depend.